

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 DUSSEL 00478 01 OF 02 071809Z

47

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

----- 055108

R 071515Z MAY 75

FM AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2593

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION USBERLIN

CINCUSAREUR (POLAD)

CINCUSAFE (POLAD)

CINCEUR (POLAD)

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 DUSSELDORF 0478

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: NORTHRHINE-WESTPHALIAN (NRW) ELECTION ANALYSIS

REF: BONN 997, MAY 6, 1975

1. SUMMARY: ALL THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES BENEFITED FROM HIGH VOTER PARTICIPATION IN THE MAY 4, 1975 NRW STATE AND LOCAL ELECTIONS. THE CDU MADE GAINS IN THOSE CITIES WITH A STRONG CIVIL SERVANT AND WHITE COLLAR POPULATION AND IN PROTESTANT RURAL AREAS WHILE THE SPD GAINED VOTES IN THE BLUE COLLAR CITIES, PRIMARILY IN THE RUHR, AND IN RURAL CATHOLIC AREAS. THE FDP GAINED NEW VOTES ACROSS THE BOARD. DESPITE AN ADVERSE ECONOMIC SITUATION, THE RADICAL PARTIES RECEIVED ONLY ONE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL VOTE. THE ELECTION OUTCOME WILL HAVE A STABILIZING INFLUENCE ON THE BONN GOVERNMENT. ALTHOUGH THE CDU AGAIN EMERGED AS THE STRONGEST PARTY IN NRW, THE SPD AND FDP WILL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 DUSSEL 00478 01 OF 02 071809Z

CONTINUE THEIR OLD ALLIANCE. BOTH SPD AND FDP WILL HAVE

DIFFICULTIES IN FILLING GOVERNMENT VACANCIES. IT IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER MINISTER PRESIDENT KUEHN WILL SERVE A FULL FIVE YEAR TERM. OPPOSITION LEADER KOEPLER (CDU) WILL GRADUALLY DISAPPEAR AS A POLITICAL FACTOR IN NRW. END SUMMARY.

2. AN UNEXPECTEDLY HIGH PARTICIPATION OF 86.7 PERCENT IN THE NRW ELECTIONS(12.7 PERCENT MORE THAN IN 1970) BENEFITED THE THREE MAJOR PARTIES TO THE EXTENT THAT EACH PARTY'S SHARE OF THE TOTAL VOTE REMAINED RELATIVELY UNCHANGED FROM THE LAST ELECTION IN 1970: CDU (PLUS .8 PERCENT), FDP (PLUS 1.5 PERCENT), SPD (MINUS 1.5 PERCENT).

3. RECENT ELECTION TRENDS IN LARGE CITIES IN FAVOR OF THE CDU WERE ONLY PARTIALLY CONFIRMED IN NRW. THE CDU DID GAIN GROUND IN "SERVICE INDUSTRY URBAN CENTERS" (COLOGNE, DUESSELDORF, BIELEFELD) WILE THE SPD ACTUALLY EXTENDED ITS STRONG CONTROL --EVEN IN HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT AREAS-- VER THE RUHR "HEAVY INDUSTRY URBAN CENTERS".

4. THE CDU WAS SUCCESSFUL IN THE PROTESTANT AREAS ON THE LOWER RHINE AND EASTERN WESTPHALIA, WHILE THE SPD IMPROVED ITS POSITION IN RURAL CATHOLIC AREAS OF THE MUENSTERLAND, THE LOWER RHINE AND THE DISTRICT OF AACHEN. THE FDP GAINED VOTES ALMOST EVERYWHERE.

5. IN COMMUNAL ELECTIONS, HELD SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE STATE ELECTIONS, THE SPD BETTERED ITS POSITION IN THE RUHR AREA, WHEREAS THE CDU MADE SLIGHT GAINS IN CITIES OUTSIDE THE RUHR. MAJOR CHANGES AMONG THE LORD MAYORS ARE NOT EXPECTED BECAUSE THE SPD AND THE FDP WILL VOTE TOGETHER IN SUPPORT OF COALITION CANDIDATES. DR. GUENTER RINSCHKE, PRESENTLY THE ONLY CDU LORD MAYOR IN THE RUHR, WILL RELINQUISH HIS POST TO WERNER FIGGEN (SPD), RETIRING NRW MINISTER OF LABOR. IN MANY TOWN HALLS, THE FDP--FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TEN YEARS -- WILL AGAIN BE REPRESENTED BECAUSE IT CLEARED THE FIVE PERCENT HURDLE. THE DKP IS REPRESENTED ONLY IN ONE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (BOTTRUP), WHERE IT DOUBLED ITS REPRESENTATION TO FOUR SEATS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 DUSSEL 00478 01 OF 02 071809Z

6. THE COALITION PARTIES BENEFITED FROM THEIR INCUMBENCY IN BONN AND DUESSELDORF, FROM HIGH VOTER PARTICIPATION, AND FROM THE CONFIDENCE OF LABOR'S RANK AND FILE IN CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S ABILITY TO COPE WITH PRESENT ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. ACCORDING TO SPD/FDP SOURCES, THE INCUMBENTS ALSO HAD THE ADVANTAGE OF FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS'S CAMPAIGNING AND PUBLICATION OF HIS SONTHOFEN SPEECH; A VIEW CAUTIOUSLY SHARED BY SOME CDU REPRESENTATIVES WHO NOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 DUSSEL 00478 02 OF 02 071859Z

47

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

----- 055675

R 071610Z MAY 75

FM AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2594

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION SUSBERLIN

GUFDAAA/CINCUSAREUR (POLAD)

CINCUSAFE (POLAD)

CINCEUR (POLAD)

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 DUSSELDORF 0478

THE CDU BEGAN TO FALL IN THE OPINION POLLS SUBSEQUENT TO THE RELEASE OF THE SPEECH IN LATE MARCH. STRAUSS'S BAVARIAN HYPERBOLE APPARENTLY DID NOT APPEAL TO THE MORE SEDATE VOTERS IN NRW. THE FIRM STAND BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGAINST THE STOCKHOLM TERRORISTS HAD NO PARTICULAR INFLUENCE ON THE VOTE; HOWEVER, HAD THE SCHMIDT GOVERNMENT YIELDED TO TERRORIST DEMANDS, VOTER SENTIMENT WOULD HAVE CERTAINLY FAVORED THE CDU.

7. THE NRW COALITION VICTORY WILL HELP TO STABILIZE THE BONN FEDERAL COALITION. A STRONGER, MORE CONFIDENT FDP SHOULD RELIEVE THE PARTY OF THE NECESSITY OF SEIZING EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW AN INDEPENDENT PROFILE. ALTHOUGH SPD AND FDP WILL LIKELY NOT SOFTEN THEIR RESPECTIVE POSITIONS ON SUCH ISSUES AS CODETERMINATION, OTHER FACETS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REFORM PROGRAM WILL PROBABLY BECOME LAW.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 DUSSEL 00478 02 OF 02 071859Z

8. NEGOTIATIONS ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY ON THE FORMATION OF A NEW SPD/FDP CABINET IN NRW. INTERIOR MINISTER WILLI WEYER (FDP) WILL RESIGN. ALTHOUGH THERE ARE A NUMBER OF CONTENDERS FOR THE POST, DR. BURKHARDT HIRSCH, A BUNDESTAG DEPUTY, IS EXPECTED TO REPLACE WEYER. HIRSCH IS A PERSONAL FRIEND OF HORST LUDWIG RIEMER, NRW/FDP CHAIRMAN AND MINISTER OF ECONOMICS AND TRANSPORT. RIEMER, WHOSE STATUS IN THE PARTY WAS GREATLY ENHANCED BY HIS ELECTION SUCCESS, WILL KEEP HIS MINISTRY. THE FDP WILL ALSO RETAIN TWO STATE SECRETARY POSITIONS AND FILL THE POST OF "PRESIDENT OF THE DUESSELDORF GOVERNMENT DISTRICT" PRESENTLY HELD BY THE SPD.

9. THE PRESENT SPD MINISTERS, DIETHER DENEKE (AGRICULTURE), JOHANNES RAU (RESEARCH AND SCIENCE) AND JUERGEN GIRGENSOHN (EDUCATION) WILL PROBABLY RETAIN THEIR POSITIONS (ALTHOUGH GIRGENSOHN MAY BE SHIFTED LATER). SHOULD PROFESSOR DR. FRIEDRICH HALSTENBERG (STATE CHANCERY AND FEDERAL AFFAIRS) TAKE OVER THE FINANCE MINISTRY FROM HANS WERTZ, DR. BISCHOFF, A JUDGE IN THE NRW CONSTITUTIONAL COURT, MAY MOVE TO HALSTENBERG'S PRESENT POST. IF HALSTENBERG REMAINS IN HIS PRESENT POSITION, THEN DR. DIETHER POSSER (JUSTICE) WILL TAKE OVER FINANCE AND THE JUSTICE MINISTRY WOULD FALL TO BISCHOFF. THE VACANCY CREATED BY WERNER FIGGEN'S RESIGNATION FROM THE LABOR AND SOCIAL MINISTRY IS POSING PROBLEMS. MINISTER PRESIDENT HEINZ KUEHN WOULD LIKE TO APPOINT A WOMAN, INGE DONNEP, BUT THE SPD FACTION FAVORS PROFESSOR FRIEDHELM FARTHMAN, BUNDESTAG DEPUTY AND MANAGER OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF THE TRADE UNIONS. WILHELM HAFENKAMP, EEC VICE-PRESIDENT IN BRUSSELS AND KUEHN'S PERSONAL CHOICE AS HIS SUCCESSOR, IS UNWILLING TO TAKE OVER ANY MINISTRY UNLESS GUARANTEED THE MINISTER PRESIDENCY UPON KUEHN'S RETIREMENT, A CONDITION WHICH THE SPD FACTION HAS REFUSED. THE SPD FACTION CHAIRMANSHIP WILL PROBABLY BE FILLED BY DR. DIETER HAAK, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY-GENERAL, WHO HAS THE BACKING OF THE POWERFUL WESTPHALIAN WING OF THE PARTY; HALSTENBERG, HOWEVER, IS ALSO AMONG THE CONTENDERS FOR THIS POSITION.

10. MINISTER PRESIDENT KUEHN HAS HINTED HE WILL STAY IN OFFICE FOR FOUR YEARS OF HIS FIVE YEAR TERM AND RETIRE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 DUSSEL 00478 02 OF 02 071859Z

IN TIME TO GIVE HIS SUCCESSOR THE ADVANTAGE OF INCUMBENCY.

THE MINISTER PRESIDENT'S PARTY WOULD PREFER HE LEAVE OFFICE AFTER TWO YEARS. THE FDP HAS MADE AS ONE OF ITS CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUED COALITION THAT KUEHN FILL THE WHOLE FIVE YEAR TERM. UNDOUBTEDLY, THE PRESSURE OF EVENTS WILL ULTIMATELY DECIDE THE LENGTH OF KUEHN'S TERM.

1. CDU OPPOSITION LEADER, HEINRICH OEPPLER, WAS UNANIMOUSLY REELECTED FACTION CHAIRMAN AND DR. WILHELM LENZ WAS RENOMINATED TO THE LANDTAG PRESIDENCY. KOEPPLER WILL PROBABLY BE REELECTED AS RHINELAND CDU CHAIRMAN IN NOVEMBER 1975 IN ORDER TO VIE THE PARTY TIME TO GROOM A NEW LEADER. AT THIS EARLY DATE, IT APPEARS RAINER BARZEL, FORMER CDU CHANCELLOR-CANDIDATE, CAN SUCCEED KOEPPLER IF HE SO WISHES (BARZEL'S RECENT CAMPAIGN IN NRW SHOWED HIM TO BE THE MOST POPULAR MAN IN THE STATE). REPORTS ARE THAT KOEPPLER WILL RETURN TO BONN AND FEDERAL POLITICS IN 1976.HENNEMEYER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, POLITICAL STABILITY, POLITICAL PARTIES, PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975DUSSEL00478
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750160-0676
From: DUSSELDORF
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750570/aaaacmcv.tel
Line Count: 240
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BONN 997, 75 MAY 6, 75 1975
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 APR 2003 by Izenbel0>; APPROVED <16 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NORTHRHINE-WESTPHALIAN (NRW) ELECTION ANALYSIS
TAGS: PINT, GE, SPD, CDU, FDP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006